The Middlebury Campus

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In memory of Jeff Cason

By CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

Respected professor, provost and community member, Jeffrey (Jeff) Cason, passed away last July, leaving an indelible impact personally and professionally on the Middlebury campus.

Jeff passed away at the University of Vermont Medical Center on July 14, 2022 due to complications with his cancer treatment. He is survived by his wife Gail Borden, who also works at the college as director of special projects for the Provost's Office, his son Gabriel, stepson Elias and his fiancée Allison, and stepdaughter Sophia, as well as other family members and friends.

Jeff was born in Madison, Wisc. in 1962 before moving to South Bend, Ind. He graduated from LaSalle Public High School in 1980 before attending Earlham College in Richmond, Ind. At Earlham, he was captivated by Spanish and international studies. It was in his first-year hall that he first met Gail, who would become his wife 22 years later.

In addition to being hallmates, Jeff and Gail were in a humanities class together. Gail recalled Jeff's early academic talent in an email to The Campus, "I remember commenting (with some frustration) how Jeff's paper, as usual, was the best of the group."

After graduation, Jeff hitchhiked throughout South and Central America, a story that his brother Tim shared during his Celebration of Life ceremony held last July.

COURTESY OF GAIL BORDEN
Jeff left an indelible impact on the Middlebury campus.

"I remember dropping him off at a highway in Indiana with some other family members, and he had his backpack and his long hair, and he's like this happy-go-lucky Jesus who's going to stick out his thumb and hitch hike all the way to South America," Tim said in the ceremony. "And he did."

He settled in Peru, taught English and married his first wife, Rosa Maria Carolina Menendez, in 1987. Upon returning to the United States, he completed a Ph.D. in Political Science at University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1993 before coming to Middlebury Collegeas an assistant professor of Political Science a year later.

Back in New England, he got

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Fire sprinklers activated in Stewart, cause flooding in residential areas

By BRINLEA LA BARGE
Senior News Editor

At approximately 7:15 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 22, fire sprinklers in Stewart Hall were accidentally discharged, although no fire was involved. Students were required to evacuate the building until the situation had been stabilized and flooding subsided around 11 p.m. the same night.

In an email to The Campus, Dean of Students Derek Doucet said the college is "still investigating" and "[has] not yet made a determination" about the reason for the flooding. However, first-year residents of the building claim that an errant golf ball struck a ceiling pipe in a fourth floor hallway, causing the pipe to burst. While that rumor has not been confirmed by school administration, Residential Life staff scheduled a "community meeting" on Wednesday afternoon to share further information about the situation, according to an email sent to Stewart residents.

An email from Associate Dean for Student Life AJ Place sent on Sunday afternoon to Stewart Hall residents said all standing water had been removed by Facilities Services by 10:30 p.m. on Saturday night, while industrial dehumidifiers and humidity monitors were installed to dry the remaining areas. According to Place, wet soft goods were laundered and returned. Students may report other damaged belongings by completing a form distributed by ResLife, which asks for a shopping link and photo of the damaged item but does not say whether students will be compensated.

Residents of the 15 most impacted rooms were offered temporary board in spaces across campus or the option to remain with friends. As of Monday, Oct. 24, most residents had returned to their rooms, while the remainder stayed in their temporary spaces until Wednesday or Thursday, when "the remediation process [was] complete," according to Place.

Editor's Note: This is a developing story. It will be updated as The Campus learns new information about the ongoing investigation.

Students, community members rally in support of Reproductive Liberty Amendment

TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Middlebury students, local residents and elected officials gathered in town on Oct. 23 to rally support for the Reproductive Liberty Amendment to the Vermont Constitution.

By DANIZA TAZABEKOVA
Contributing Writer

More than 60 Middlebury students and residents rallied at Triangle Park on Oct. 23 at 1 p.m. to support the Reproductive Liberty Amendment — Proposition 5, Article 22 — to the Vermont Constitution. The rally was organized by the Middlebury College Democrats and the Addison County Democratic Committee to educate voters on Proposition 5, Article 22, which was passed by the legislature in February 2022 and will be on the ballot for voters in the Nov. 8 midterm elections.

The amendment reads as follows: "[Personal reproductive liberty] That an individual's right to personal reproductive autonomy is central to the liberty and dignity to determine one's own life course and shall not be denied or infringed unless justified by a compelling State interest achieved by the least restrictive means."

Freddi Mitchell '25 and Maggie Bryan '25, the co-presidents of College Democrats, were contacted by Zoe Kaslow, Addison County Democratic Committee chair, and Sam Donnelly, Planned Parenthood campaign manager for the Reproductive Liberty Amendment, about organizing a rally to garner support for the amendment.

"Freddi and I were quickly drawn to the issue because it's something the College Democrats prioritize and are

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Community Council recommends banning pledge processes for student organizations, social houses

By SUSANNA SCHATZ
Local Editor

Middlebury's Community Council voted unanimously to pass a recommendation on to Residential Life and the Student Activities Office (SAO) that would ban social house pledge processes from student organizations. It also recently recommended that social house oversight transition from the domain of the Community Council to that of Residential Life.

Social house oversight entails conducting biennial house reviews to ensure that the houses fulfill their missions and adhere to all college policies, reviewing applications for new social houses and having the ability to revoke social house status, according to Citlali Aguilera-Rico '23, co-chair of Community Council.

Social houses were established in 1991 following the termination of Greek life at Middlebury in the same year. Middlebury has five social houses: Chromatic, The Mill, PALANA, Tavern and Xenia, each founded on a common interest or for an affinity group. The organizations all have houses on campus, but members are not required to live in the physical house. Some students do elect to live there, but for the rest, the house serves as a social gathering space for members and Middlebury students at large.

SAO and Residential Life will ultimately determine how the Community Council's recommendation of removing pledge processes is implemented.

"Our power is in making recommendations that are representative of our entire community, so faculty, staff and students," Aguilera-Rico said, regarding Community Council's work.

Community Council chose to address social house pledge processes because they felt these affect not only students but the entire Middlebury College community.

"This is an issue that not only impacts students, but it also impacts staff that need to facilitate anti-hazing training and management of these organizations, so it's really a whole campus kind of issue," Aguilera-Rico said.

The Community Council recommendation cites the student activity fee that is a part of Middlebury students' tuition as a central reason they recommend pledge processes be eliminated. The 2022–23 student activity fee is $460.

"If everybody is paying this fee, why should they have to go through a lengthy pledge process to become a member of an organization that they essentially are paying to help allow to run," Aguilera-Rico said.

The recommendation also specifies inclusivity as an aim.

"Traditionally, pledge processes tend to be very exclusionary and kind of create a non-inclusive atmosphere, which is something that Middlebury has stated in the past they're not about," Aguilera-Rico said. "In

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Jesse Stratton appointed new director of Environmental Health, Safety and Compliance

By MANDY BERGHELA
Contributing Writer

After seven months of vacancy, Middlebury named Jesse Stratton the new director of Environmental Health, Safety and Compliance (EHS). He started his new role on Oct. 3.

The Vice President of Administration and Chief Risk Officer Mike Thomas announced the arrival of Stratton in an Oct. 12 email to the Middlebury community, describing him as "a collaborative leader and advocate for employee safety and compliance."

As a lifelong resident of Vermont who grew up just past the Snow Bowl, Stratton has a deep connection to the Middlebury area.

"When the opportunity was presented to potentially join Middlebury, it was one I could not pass up and am humbled to have been selected to join," Stratton said.

Being surrounded by Vermont's landscape growing up encouraged a love for nature and the environment, especially aquatic ecosystems, which led him to study freshwater and marine biology at the University of New Hampshire in Durham.

"That education took me to a career in public policy advocating for the needs of our agricultural communities specifically with regard to water quality and neighbor conflict resolution," Stratton said. "Soon after moving back to Vermont after college I was approached by the group that would eventually become Atlas Technical Consulting."

Atlas Technical Consulting is a full-service environmental consulting firm with over 40 locations across the country. Stratton worked at the Vermont chapter, located in Williston, Vt., which specializes in a variety of areas such as infrastructure, industrial hygiene and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliance for clients in the Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and upstate New York areas.

"I started as an entry-level technician eventually making my way into a senior leadership role in the company," Stratton said. "The role allowed me to return to a more hands-on role supporting various construction and infrastructure projects through Vermont, New England and New York."

Stratton worked at Atlas for 17 years, allowing him to make connections with clientele at both a local and national level. One of the connections he made was with Middlebury, as he has had several opportunities to work with the college over the years, beginning with the Forest Hall renovation project in 2010.

"My primary contacts with the college were through facilities but led to contact with numerous departments around campus," Stratton said. "I specifically offered guidance and support for hazard material assessments, indoor air quality concerns, permitting, Covid-19 management (HVAC evaluations and capacity concerns) and other environmental and safety related issues. Through this I gained an understanding of the variety of buildings and unique needs that make up Middlebury, Breadloaf and the Snow Bowl in particular, and I look forward to learning more about Middlebury and all of its entities in my new role."

Stratton is the third director of Environmental Health, Safety, and Compliance at Middlebury. The position has existed for the past 25 years, with the title changing from coordinator to director two years ago.

In his position, Stratton says he will be working with the entirety of the Middlebury community, including faculty, staff and students, in order to uphold the college's commitment to health and safety.

"This includes things like OSHA training, risk evaluation and mitigation efforts for personnel and the institution as a whole, Covid-19 operations support, Personal Protection Equipment, First Aid and CPR, environmental submittal coordination and much more in Vermont and California," Stratton explained.

One of the most important aspects of his position is transparency and engagement with campus community members. His contact information is readily available on the college website.

"The EHS office and Risk Management as a whole is committed to supporting all departments, councils, groups and individuals here at Middlebury," Stratton said. "We are committed to being fully transparent and accountable and look forward to working with any and all in a collaborative environment."

Outside of his work, Stratton is also a father of two teenagers with his partner of almost 30 years.

MIDDCOURSES TO RETURN BEFORE J-TERM REGISTRATION

THEA VOLPP/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

By CAROLINE HARDING
Layout Editor

MiddCourses, an anonymous, student-run course review and recommendations site for Middlebury students, will be returning in the near future. The site was shut down in 2021 because the software used to create the website was outdated.

The Middlebury Development Club (MiddDev) has been working since the website went down to restore it. The new MiddCourses was developed in Node and Typescript and re-coded from scratch. Project lead Nicholas Sliter '23 is currently doing an independent study devoted to restoring the website. He is hoping for a launch within the next week, before winter term registration.

The new MiddCourses site will function in a similar way to the old site. Students will review two courses and then they will be able to view all recommendations for the next semester, with the exception of 100-level courses which will be viewable by all students. "Eventually, I'll be implementing a recommendations system that will take all of the reviews a student inputs and then give them recommendations for courses they should take in the future," Sliter said.

Since the website went down in spring of 2021, students have turned to alternative sites and word of mouth to try to evaluate which courses they should take.

"There's no good alternative solution. MiddKid is out of date. RateMyProfessor doesn't really work in the same way because you don't rate courses, just professors," said Sliter.

The information on MiddCourses included summaries of assignments, grading difficulty and anecdotes about classes.

"As a Feb orientation leader I felt like I was giving students so much information about classes, but I wish I could have referred them to a better site with more opinions than just my own," Meredith Hespe '23 said.

Greta Bishop '24.5 also expressed excitement at the return of MiddCourses.

"It will be really helpful when selecting courses to know what the workload will be like and what the atmosphere of the class is like. I wish I had this resource earlier." Bishop said.

Sliter said a beta test is underway to catch bugs before the site's official launch.

"I didn't have it for long before it disappeared so that was unfortunate," Silter said, referring to the old site. "It's fun to build things, and I see there's a lot of value here so why don't I build it."

In memory of Jeff Cason

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in touch with Gail, who was also married at the time with two children.

"An Earlham classmate let us know that we both were here, and I still remember bringing my daughter Sophia, nine months old, to his first office on the first floor of Munroe Hall," Gail said. "With Sophia in an umbrella stroller, we walked around the campus on a beautiful fall day and got reacquainted."

A few years after the end of their first marriages, Gail and Jeff wed in 2002. Jeff became "Papi" to Sophia and Elias, and the couple welcomed their son Gabriel.

Jeff enjoyed a long, vibrant career at Middlebury. He became an associate professor in 2001 before becoming the dean of International Programs in 2006. He was named Edward C. Knox Professor of International Studies and Political Science in 2008. His area of expertise was economic development and democratization in South America.

With grants from the Fulbright Foundation, he went to Uruguay and Brazil to research and coauthor the book "Overseas Research: A Practical Guide." He also published "The Political Economy of Integration: The Experience of Mercosur" about the South America trade bloc, in addition to numerous papers.

As dean of International Programs, he helped to expand Middlebury schools to Jordan, Morocco, Israel, Japan, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Egypt, India and the United Kingdom. He became the vice president for academic affairs and dean of the Language Schools in 2015 before a promotion to executive vice president and provost of Middlebury in 2018. He helped support Middlebury through the Covid-19 pandemic with grace, determination and good humor.

COURTESY OF GAIL BORDEN

Jeff served as an advisor, mentor and friend to Drew Miller '03. Drew also worked with Jeff as he transitioned to administrative work, and observed Jeff's valuable leadership skills firsthand.

"If he didn't have an answer for you right then, he would say so; then you would get a note from him with the answer once he had looked into the question further," Drew wrote in an email to The Campus. "Admitting one does not have an immediate answer is a true and honest sign of leadership, and following up with one, if found, is a true sign of dedication and sincerity."

Jeff valued travel both personally and professionally. He took work trips to South America, Europe, Africa and Asia as well as sabbaticals with his family to Brazil and Italy.

Along with Jeff's love of travel and languages, he was passionate about food. Gail fondly remembered how, during their sabbatical in Italy, Jeff befriended a couple of locals interested in learning English. They became friends, and Gail recalled one night where the families had dinner.

"Even for Jeff it was a little ambitious to cook an Italian meal for Italians, but of course he succeeded and they loved his dinner and we had a fabulous evening. The daughter [of one of the Italians], unbeknownst to us didn't like lasagna, but she liked Jeff's — he always had a knack for making an impression," Gail said.

For Jeff, cooking was therapeutic and a way of connecting with others. In addition to lovingly preparing food for his family, Jeff liked grilling for friends. He hosted a memorable dinner for the directors of the Schools Abroad on his screened-in porch, as well as grill nights with other faculty members. During the pandemic, he experimented with sourdough, and Gail has enjoyed sharing his sourdough starter with friends and family members.

Undoubtedly, Jeff touched numerous lives. In a memoriam released by the college in July, the Director of National Economic Council for the Biden administration and former student of Jeff's Brian Deese '00 said, "I am one of the countless people whose life was changed by Jeff. He was an extraordinary mentor to me. He made it clear he believed in my academic capability when I needed that. He was tough on me when I deserved it, and most of all he had a magnetic passion for the ways that political change could help people's lives all around the world. He helped spark in me a passion that I carry to this day and try to instill in my kids."

Drew also fondly remembers their relationship, and recalled a humorous anecdote about his early interactions with Jeff.

"One day I happened to walk by his office. His door was open and he was working on his computer. I had skipped his class that day. I said hello and he invited me in, and then he asked me to shut the door and have a seat. 'You know,' he said, 'you are frustratingly good at this. If you tried — just a modicum — you'd be dangerous," Drew recalled. "He reviewed and gave guidance on two theses (honor and high-honors)."

Throughout the years, Drew appreciated Jeff's kindness.

"Jeff never forgot my name, and when, as provost, he would meet with the Alumni Board during my tenure on it, he always greeted me with the 'cool guy' half- handshake/half hug," Drew said. "Jeff was a brilliant academic, a thoughtful advisor and mentor, and I cannot think of a negative word said about him as a professor."

Jeff shared so many identities: father, husband, friend, professor, mentor, scholar. His wisdom, sense of adventure, humor and kindness are missed by many.

"He liked creating things by connecting and motivating people," Gail said. "Middlebury was a huge part of his life."

SGA announces winners of first-year and senior senator races

By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

The Student Government Association (SGA) held elections for the First-Year Senator and Senior Senator positions on Oct. 11 and 12. The new First-Year Senators are Kaveh Abu Khaleel '26 and Nikita Rodov '26. Florian Knollman '23 and Hieu Nguyen '23 won the senior senator positions in an uncontested election.

Exactly 200 students, or roughly 31%, of the Class of 2026, responded to the voting form. Abu Khaleel won the race with 69% of the votes, with Rodov following at 54%.

"The impression I got is that people generally don't know what SGA is freshman year, so I wanted to bring the concerns of the class to the SGA and be a voice for them," Abu Khaleel said.

Abu Khaleel is a half-Palestinian and half Filipino-Chinese international student from Hong Kong, and said they hope their background will bring a different perspective to SGA. Abu Khaleel is committed to getting to know the first-year class and being a loud advocate for their concerns.

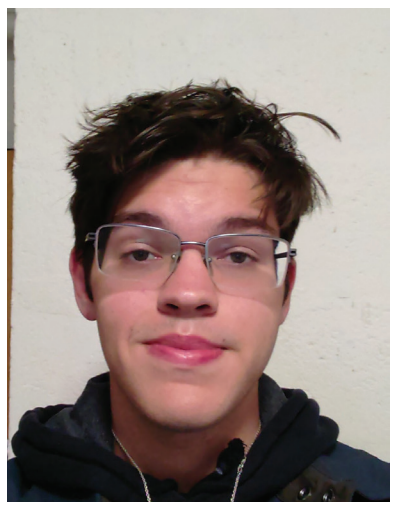
Rodov ran on a platform emphasizing community, opportunity and helping fellow first-year students navigate the resources of their new environment. In an interview with The Campus, Rodov expressed his passion for storytelling and being a force of amplification for others.

"Something important to me in high school was getting to know different groups of people, figuring out their takes on student life, issues, and goals," Rodov said. "When I came to Middlebury I knew that was something I wanted to do, it would allow me to make tangible and proactive change."

At the top of Rodov's agenda is equity, inclusion and genuine care amongst peers. Rodov said he was petrified to learn from conversations with older students that hate crimes are described as "not too uncommon." In the past year, two alleged hate-related crimes garnered student attention, including an alleged incident of hate motivated crime and the desecration of the Muslim Students Association's prayer space during Ramadan.

"Knowing that my peers are supposed to be uncomfortable in a place they're supposed to call home... It shows that even though we're a liberal arts college it doesn't mean we're blanketed with that safety, and a lot of my peers come here with that expectation," Rodov said.

Rodov also hopes to address the long lines outside of dining halls, and he is looking forward to talking with students to identify their concerns.



Courtesy Photos

First-Year Senators Kaveh Abu Khaleel '26 (L) and Nikita Rodov '26 (R)

The voting process for the Senior Senator position was canceled because the third candidate withdrew from the race after the candidates were announced, so Knollman and Nguyen automatically won the uncontested election. Both Knollman and Nguyen told The Campus that they decided to run when they realized the candidacy was vacant, and they attribute this to the SGA's lack of visibility to the students.

"It is surprising that SGA does so much for the students, and the students don't know about it," Knollman said. "My goal is for SGA to communicate more with the students."

Nguyen said the Senior Senator position is a way for him to give back to the Middlebury community, and he is inspired by his friend Miguel Sanchez-Tortoledo '23 who was the first-year, sophomore and junior senator for the class of 2023. Sanchez-Tortoledo passed away last August.

"I wonder what it would be like if we had more students who cared about our class like Miguel did," Nguyen said. "I love Middlebury and I love this community, this is the least I can do to help."

As an international student from Vietnam, Nguyen is committed to increasing transportation access for students. Nguyen said students who do not have a car on campus may miss out on certain opportunities around Vermont.

"For me, I have a bucket list that I want to complete before I graduate, for example going to Lake Dunmore and Lake Silverlake [sic]," Nguyen said."I want to create that option for students, and perhaps they have a bucket list too, and I want to help them complete that easily before they graduate."

Knollman and Nguyen both emphasized listening to the senior student body for their needs.

"Do they want more social events? Do they want career services to figure out what to do after college?" Knollman said. "Some students need support with mental health, some students need access to transportation. Our goal is to figure out what the senior students' needs are."

Nguyen looks forward to meeting more students through this position and building a supportive community for the seniors' last year.

"As an international student, I personally come here alone, and I don't have any family members here," Nguyen said. "And in a country that doesn't speak my language, I feel like the need for being in a community is so high for me, and hopefully through this role I can get to know them, so I can support them and be supported."

Middlebury fall foliage

Photos by TOM NEVINS
Staff Photographer

COMMUNITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDS BANNING PLEDGE PROCESSES FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, SOCIAL HOUSES

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general, the pledge process has historically been associated with hazing."

Middlebury has made an active effort to combat hazing in social house pledging. The Middlebury Handbook outlines its policy against hazing, stating that hazing is antithetical to Middlebury's goals as an institution. Social houses and sports teams have historically been the groups most commonly reported for hazing new members, including Tavern, one of the few social houses previously accused of hazing that still exists today. The Campus' last reporting on hazing allegations at Tavern was about incidents in 2011.

Tavern, also known as Omega Alpha, is currently conducting its pledge process.

Leslie Ramirez '25, a prospective new member of Tavern, is participating in the house's process. "From the start, Tav was very stern about their no-hazing policies," Ramirez said. "I have felt very safe in the house and all of the events."

Jimmy Morales '23, president of Tavern, spoke to the value of Tavern's current pledge process.

"The pledge process is crucial to us because we want to ensure we have a community that understands our values," Morales said.

Nadia Hare/The Middlebury Campus

This semester Tavern has roughly 60 new members participating in pledge.

This semester, Tavern has roughly 60 new members participating in pledge, also known as the education process. Morales described Tavern's pledge process as a period of new members getting to know one another as well as the current members of the house.

"We want people to feel welcomed into the house. The process isn't meant to shame, embarrass or harm anyone," Morales said. "Anyone attempting to haze a pledge will be removed immediately."

"Getting to know the membership a bit more and see how welcoming and genuinely interested in getting to know us has been lovely," Ramirez said. She explained that she wanted to join Tavern for the house's community service opportunities and to get involved with another social house, as she is already a member of PALANA.

PALANA (Pan-African, Latino, Asian and Native American) is Middlebury's newest social house, gaining official status in 2019 after previously existing as an academic interest house at 97 Adirondack View. PALANA also holds a pledge each semester for new members.

"The process is important because we use it to get to know the incoming members and allow them to feel comfortable with the house and the members," said Chris Saavedra '24, president of PALANA.

Saavedra noted that the PALANA pledge is only one week long, a length that is fairly short compared to those of other social houses. He emphasized that PALANA aims to provide a safe space for BIPOC students and create an open and welcoming environment.

"We do not think 'pledge' should be asking the students to do more than they should," Saavedra said. "We promote diversity and inclusion and believe that if we want to abide by these principles, we should not have students proving themselves to us."

The Community Council's recommendation to remove pledge processes would not affect student organizations that hold auditions or try-outs, according to Aguilera-Rico. Requiring members to apply to be a part of an organization would still be allowed, as long as it does not violate the college's non-discrimination policy. The recommendation specifically suggests that lengthy pledge processes, such as those conducted by social houses, be prohibited.

Editor's Note: Susanna Schatz is an inactive member of Tavern. She is not participating in or assisting with the pledge process this year.

COUNSELING SERVICES WELCOMES THERAPY DOG, STELLA

By MARS ETGÜ
Contributing Writer

Counseling Services at the Center for Health and Wellness (CHW) welcomed a new member last August, Stella the therapy dog, with plans to give students regular access to a therapy animal.

Since receiving approval to come to campus three weeks ago, Stella has made appearances at the college's flu and Covid-19 vaccination clinics. Stella's handler, Associate Director of the CHW Sarah Lawrence, is looking forward to integrating Stella into many Counseling Services offerings, from individual and group counseling sessions to open-access events.

"I think the emphasis for Stella for me is to have her accessible to all students, whether they're a part of counseling or not," Lawrence said.

She added that some students, for various reasons, may not want to interact with Stella and that the CHW is being very mindful of making sure those students are not put in uncomfortable situations.

Both Lawrence and Barbara McCall, executive director of the CHW, emphasized that Stella had undergone extensive training and certification to do her job. She needed tests of trustworthiness and obedience, letters of recommendation, a letter from her veterinarian and a letter by Lawrence stating why she wanted to get Stella certified.

"It takes a lot of work on the owner's end, to go through the process and keep up the pieces," Lawrence said.

McCall said that the difficult process was a big part of why it was hard for the CHW to have a regular therapy animal. The fact that Stella has been added was primarily due to Lawrence wanting to get Stella certified independent of the CHW.

"All animals can provide therapeutic experiences, but not all of them are specially trained to do that," McCall said. "And we've been waiting for the opportunity to have someone who's certified to come in and do it."

Though the CHW did not directly consult students in the initial decision-making process, McCall expressed that they had known for a long time that students wanted more access to therapy animals. "It felt like a no-brainer," McCall said.

Some students who spoke with The Campus were unaware of Stella's presence but expressed excitement about having a therapy dog on campus.

"I hadn't heard of this, so I'm excited to take advantage of it," Maria Gutierrez Delgado '26 said. "Even if it's not a necessity, I think it's a great addition to counseling resources."

The CHW will pay special attention to students' opinions on how they integrate Stella into their services. Since Stella is the first regular therapy dog on campus, the integration process is in its pilot phase, making it all the more important to listen to feedback, McCall added.

The CHW is also new, having formed due to offices that specialize in different areas of student health coming together in the last years. It includes Health Services, Counseling, Health and Wellness Education (HWE), Sports Medicine and Integrated Care, a new office working with students who have complex health pictures.

"We don't bill students, it's all included in the comprehensive fee, students don't know that sometimes," McCall said.

Services by counseling include individual and group counseling sessions, outreach-based services and Let's Talk, which is a new program for students to drop in for 25-minute consultations, no appointment needed.

"[Let's Talk] is kind of counseling-lite," Lawrence said, adding that it is something she did at another university previously, and that it can be an easier entrance into counseling. She mentioned that she's looking forward to incorporating Stella there as well.

McCall and Lawrence said they would love to incorporate other therapy animals in the office, but the process would have to be initiated by a staff member.

"It's a deeply personal decision," McCall said. "It's really about us, waiting for someone who wants to do that, and then talking about opportunities for collaboration or integration, versus the other way around, getting people to do the work of getting a therapy dog, training them and bringing them."

Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus

Stella joins Counseling Services at the Center for Health and Wellness as a new therapy dog.

Trick or treaters gather in town centers to celebrate Halloween

By CHARLIE KEOHANE & MAGGIE REYNOLDS
Editor at Large and Senior Local Editor

Photo courtesy of Michelle Steele

Local families often travel to other neighborhoods to trick or treat.

For rural communities like Ripton, Bristol and Middlebury, Vt., town centers and more densely populated neighborhoods become a trick-or-treater's paradise. Since many houses are farther apart, parents often direct their children to a central area where they can celebrate safely. Some rural communities have established different traditions altogether.

In Middlebury, trick-or-treaters and their parents congregate in the Buttolph Acres neighborhood, behind Shaw's.

Associate Professor of German Florence Feiereisen lives in Middlebury with her children, ages nine and 12. Feiereisen estimated that she and her husband buy about 200 pieces of Halloween candy to distribute each year and that the neighborhood draws families from surrounding areas like Cornwall and Weybridge to come trick-or-treat.

"We buy insane amounts of Halloween candy," she told The Campus. "It is a pretty densely populated area."

Families come in waves, with the youngest groups starting around 5 p.m. and lasting until older children come later in the evening.

"You run into so many people that you know," Feiereisen added.

Additionally, towns often incorporate local businesses into community events and traditions.

Professor of Political Science Jessica Teets, who lives in Bristol with her ten-year-old son, said that businesses in Bristol have a week-long scavenger hunt leading up to Halloween with raffles and prizes.

> "... the people on those streets knew to be ready for trick or treaters just based on unofficial tradition of the town".

Similar to Middlebury, parents often select a central area for families to gather, she said. The roads are closed down to ensure a safe, festive environment. For Teets, it is an ideal time for the community to come together.

"It's sort of like a party environment," she told The Campus. "The streets are just thronged with kids."

There are also other events that provide fun for all, such as a free haunted forest in Bristol. The haunted forest begins as more "kid friendly," with treats early in the evening, before becoming scarier later at night for older participants. A variety of Halloween-related events are listed on Facebook pages for each town in the area.

Paige Cusanelli '24 grew upin Starksboro and Orwell, two small towns in Addison County, and often traveled to neighborhoods in Bristol for Halloween.

"Bristol had a few roads from the town center that had enough people who gave out candy for trick or treating, and the people on those streets knew to be ready for trick or treaters just based on unofficial tradition of the town," Cusanelli said in an email to The Campus.

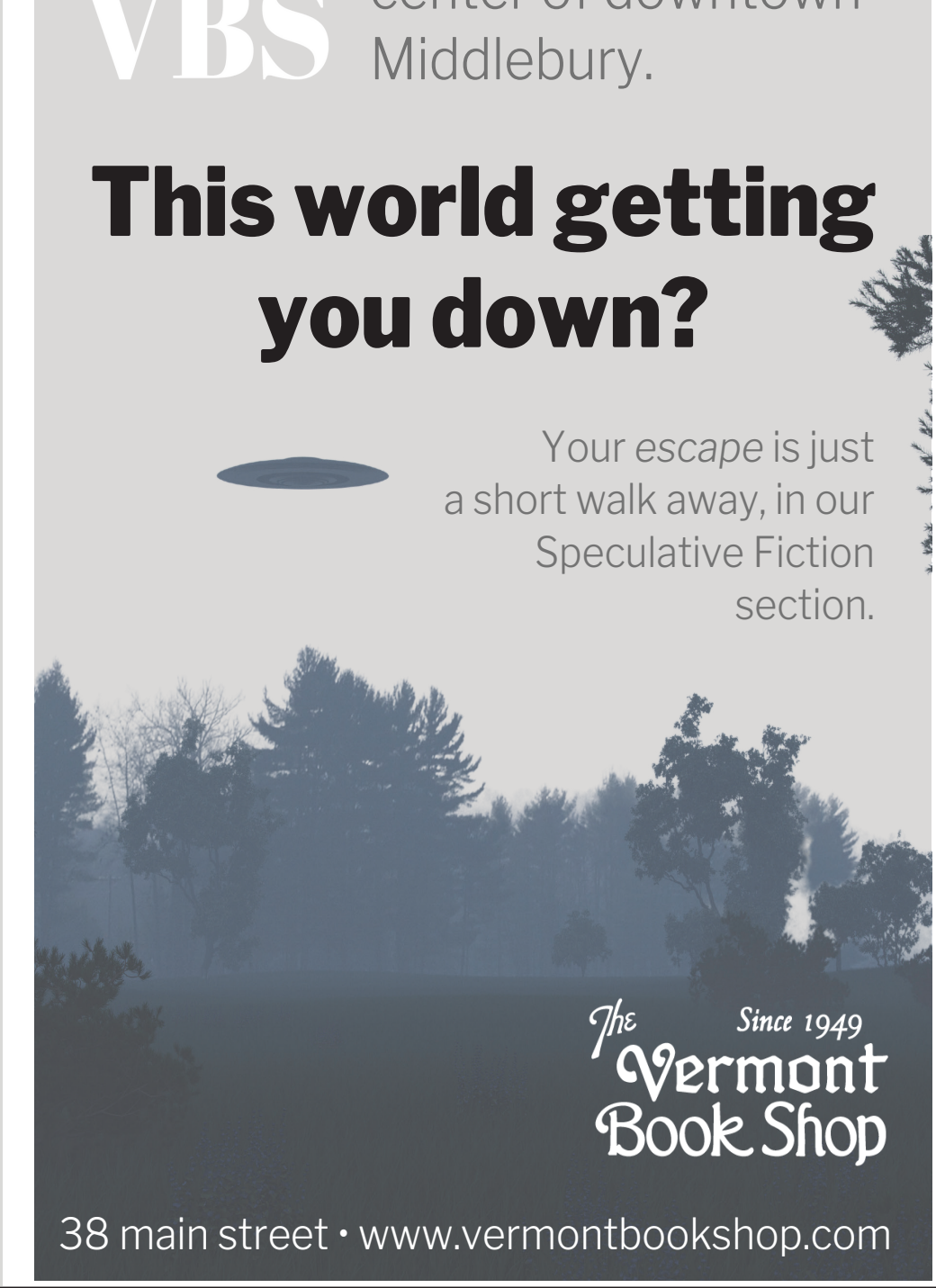
There were still festive activities even within the small towns Cusanelli added.

"In both Starksboro and Orwell, there are also often little events at the firestation or the libraries for families to show up, hang out, and drink apple cider for Halloween," Cusanelli said.

Mei Dwyer-Frattalone '24 is from central Vermont and noted how the rural environment encouraged families to celebrate Halloween in more creative ways.

"None of the houses were close enough to trick or treat, but families from South Woodbury and East Calais made Halloween by holding a dinner where neighborhood kids could show off their costumes," Dwyer-Frattalone said in an email to The Campus. Dwyer-Frattalone added that she would have to drive much farther away to find neighborhoods to trick or treat. Growing up, Cusanelli appreciated celebrating the holiday within a smaller community.

"I'd expect that a lot of rural areas have similar traditions. I never thought about it as anything different or special," she said. "To me, it's weird that there are so many people who don't have this experience."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Students, community members rally in support of Reproductive Liberty Amendment

Continued from Page 1

passionate about," Bryan said. "Ballot measures are notoriously confusing, which creates inaccessibility to voting and knowledge of issues, and the solution is to educate the electorate."

In June 2022, the Supreme Court ruled in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization that abortion rights were not guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, overturning almost 50 years of precedent established in Roe v. Wade. The decision triggered anti-abortion laws in thirteen states, banning abortion with limited exceptions, and access to abortion in several other states is now legally murky or threatened.

"There's not much education within the school community about Article 22 because there are a lot of students who don't think it will affect them, but the amendment would protect future Middlebury students who come from states with strict abortion laws," Mitchell said.

Among the speakers at the rally were Vermont State Senator Ruth Hardy (D-Addison), Democratic candidate for Vermont Attorney General Charity Clark, Democratic candidate for Vermont State Treasurer Mike Pieciak and other state legislators and local officials.

TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

"For the past four years, the Vermont legislature has been working to secure the right to reproductive liberty to ensure that politicians won't have a say in your reproductive rights," Hardy said.

Senator Hardy offered attendees stickers, pins, bags and posters with the slogan "Say Yes to Article 22."

"This amendment was overwhelmingly passed on a tripartisan vote in both houses of the legislature four times. We went through the lengthy process of amending a constitution, now it is time for you to vote," Hardy said.

According to Pieciak, reproductive freedom is also an economic justice issue at its fundamental core.

"Every family in Vermont should make their own decision about the timing of when they choose to start a family and take a break from their professional lives, and we must help them afford the choice of having a family. Reproductive freedom is essential to the fiscal strength of the state," Pieciak said.

Clark responded to claims that the amendment is unnecessary because there is already an independent Vermont statutory protection for abortion as a fundamental right throughout pregnancy in June 2019.

"The language was drafted by constitutional scholars and medical experts," Clark said, referring to the amendment. "It was vetted and approved in public hearings. Politics is fickle; it is very easy to change a statute, but as we can see, it is very difficult to amend a constitution, so this proposition is meaningful."

According to Mitchell, the impact of the Reproductive Liberty Amendment extends far beyond Vermont's borders. It sends a message to the rest of the country that "everyone with a uterus is protected by the government," Mitchell said.

"No one should be treated like a second-class citizen and no one's right to bodily autonomy should be stripped from them. Voting for the amendment would send a message to the rest of the country that people care about protecting abortion rights," Mitchell said.

Editor's Note: Maggie Bryan '25 is an Arts & Culture Editor for The Campus. Senator Ruth Hardy is married to Professor Jason Mittell, faculty advisor for The Campus.

ACORN opens brick and mortar Food Hub on Exchange Street

By DANIELA ORTIZ & EMILY HOGAN
Contributing Writer and Local Editor

The Addison County Relocalization Network (ACORN) opened its very own Food Hub on Exchange Street in Middlebury on Tuesday, Oct. 4.

The Food Hub provides wholesale buyers in Middlebury and surrounding areas with the opportunity to support local farms and produce suppliers. Prior to the opening, the Food Hub solely existed online as a wholesale market, where farmers or producers of value-added products, which change physical form over the production process to increase their value such as flour or jam, could sell their products to local customers. With this new expansion into a physical location, ACORN aims to increase its presence in the community.

ACORN is a board-driven network and nonprofit organization that was founded in 2005 with the mission of revitalizing Addison County's local economy and public life. "[ACORN serves] as a catalyst for developing local, sustainable, and collaborative solutions to the challenges facing Addison County Communities," according to its website.

ACORN derives its understanding of "relocalization" from the Post Carbon Institute, a California-based think tank focused on information related to community resilience in the face of climate change, the website states. The institute focuses on three areas of local revitalization; food, energy and money, which ACORN has adopted.

Within the domain of food, the ACORN network prioritizes sustainable development and locally sourced food through working with partners such as small- and medium-sized farms and colleges. Some of their past initiatives have included the ACORN Wholesale Collaborative, which increased research into the barriers to purchasing local food as well as organized events to bring new buyers and sellers together. Another past initiative was the Farm-To-School program for elementary-aged children, which aimed to bring local food into schools to increase nutrition while supporting the local farm community.

TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
The ACORN Food Hub had its grand opening event on Oct. 4.

The Food Hub combines successful aspects of previous ACORN initiatives, while also opening the door for a more integrated facility. Aggregation, storage, processing, distribution and marketing of local foods are all supply chain elements that the Food Hub will facilitate and support.

ACORN is one player in a system of eight food hubs working to move locally sourced products in and out of Vermont and New York States.

Plans for development of the Middlebury Food Hub began in the fall of 2021, when ACORN partnered with the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO). The Food Hub shares CVOEO's warehouse space in Middlebury.

"This partnership enabled us to get the Food Hub off the ground and to pilot it without a lot of capital investment," Lindsey Berk, executive director of ACORN, wrote in an email to The Campus. "We are extremely grateful for our partnership with CVOEO."

The Food Hub's primary function is to bridge the gap between farmers, food producers and members of the community. The rural nature of Addison County makes it difficult for many farms to transport food safely and efficiently.

"The [Food Hub] is a centralized space with dry, cold and frozen storage that helps ease the challenge of accessing these small and medium farms," Berk wrote.

In designing and implementing the Food Hub, Berk and ACORN gathered an array of perspectives from farmers and food producers across Addison County.

"We want to make sure the Food Hub provides solutions for small and medium sized food producers across product categories," she wrote.

The Hub has also developed practices on the consumers' side to encourage equal access and equitable distribution, two concepts central to ACORN's mission.

This past summer, the fourth year of ACORN's "Farmacy: Food is Medicine" program was housed in the Food Hub. Through this program, physician-recommended clients can access local food to treat diet-related illnesses; it also helps address food insecurity and supports local farms.

ACORN still faces challenges regarding peoples' perceptions of high prices and the inconvenience of purchasing local food compared to simply going to the grocery store. Berk noted that the cheap price of grocery store products is made possible by government subsidies. "It doesn't reflect the true costs and impacts on the health of the land, human and non-human beings who share this planet," she said.

ACORN aims to protect and support local farms that don't receive the same governmental subsidies, particularly now that Vermont land is facing intense development pressure. An additional restriction involves access to affordable housing for those who pursue work in local Vermont agriculture.

"The issues are complex and compounded," Berk added.

ACORN has received various grants for staffing and infrastructure support. This funding, along with the partnership with CVOEO, allow for a centralized space for quickly unloading food products, or cross-docking, as well as short term dry, cold and frozen storage. The Hub also acts as a space for food systems businesses to drop freight shipments.

"The ACORN Food Hub increases access to markets for local food producers, promotes farm viability and contributes to a vibrant local economy," Berk said.

The Food Hub also increases accessibility in offering local food in K-12 school cafeterias. Additionally, The Hub's online presence allows easier access to local products for wholesale buyers in the restaurant and grocery industries, as well as at colleges and hospitals.

Berk and ACORN are currently working with CVOEO, as well as locally-based HOPE (Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects) and Addison Allies, which are organizations that work to provide necessities for vulnerable populations, to evaluate the possibility of building a community commercial kitchen as part of the Food Hub.

"We are still fine tuning our processes, our marketing and sales practices and envisioning where this space can and should permanently live," Berk said.

TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
The Food Hub will serve to bridge the gap between consumers and the local food-producing community.

Arousal non-concordance

COLUMN

Sex Panther

Picture this: You walk into the Grille after a Friday night out, ripe with anticipation to take that first, deliciously warm bite into a crispy Dr. Feel Good. Sitting at a lowly lit table with your friends, your buzzer erupts and you spring out of your seat to collect your winnings. All of a sudden, on the walk back to your booth, you notice that despite your boundless enthusiasm for this sandwich, your supposed-to-be-watery mouth is as dry as a desert. What's going on?

Turns out, the same thing can happen to your genitals! As developed as our bodies are as humans, one thing our anatomy can't seem to get right is the ability to physically communicate our desires, preferences or levels of pleasure accurately in sexual contexts. In fact, I know this sounds crazy, but sometimes you literally have no control over the way your body responds during intimacy. Someone with a penis, for example, may be thinking to themselves, "Wow, I'm so excited to have sex with this person!" and yet still struggle to get an erection. Or perhaps another person, despite feeling substantially uncomfortable in an intimate situation, has a fully lubricated vagina.

Thea Volpp

This discrepancy between your emotional or cognitive desires and your body's physiological response has a name: arousal non-concordance. Most people who have done any sort of exploration into their sexuality have likely come across some sort of arousal non-concordance, potentially causing them to wonder if there's something wrong. The answer, as you might guess by now, is a resounding NO! To quote sex educator Emily Nagoski, "The world is somehow convinced that a person's body knows more about what a person wants or likes than a person does." What a silly idea!

So, what triggers physiological arousal if it can seemingly be so detached from one's true feelings? First off, let's distinguish between physiological and subjective arousal. Physiological arousal is an involuntary bodily response, which, in sexual situations, may include an increase in heart rate or blood flow to the genitals. On the other hand, subjective sexual arousal describes one's mental experience in sex. Physiological arousal can happen because one is subjectively aroused, but it can also happen simply because sexually relevant touch is occurring and the brain sends signals to trigger a physical response. It can also be a part of normal processes, such as the vagina's self-cleaning mechanisms.

On a more serious note, arousal non-concordance is especially important to understand within the context of consent. It is not uncommon for survivors to experience involuntary arousal during sexual assault or violence. One's physiological arousal does not count as "consent," nor does it reflect their feelings about the situation. Even so, problematic arguments saying the contrary continue to be used in our criminal justice system to refute victims' claims in attempts to defend sexual offenders. This terrible distortion of evidence makes the misunderstanding of arousal non-concordance a highly present social justice issue.

All in all, our bodies are insanely complex and advanced systems. They can also be really mystical and confusing at the same time. Ultimately, what's important is that we show consideration and empathy for each other's expressed feelings and preferences over all else. If we all were to do so, the world would be a far better place.

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IN HONOR OF THE KNOLL

Op-ed

Aria Bowden, Claire Contreras, Viv Merrill, Hannah Laga Abram, Andrés Oyaga, and Lauren Gemery *are members of the class of 2023, and* ***SJ O'Connor*** *is a member of the class of 2024*

Founded by students in 2003, Middlebury College's educational garden, The Knoll, has become an incredibly important center of climate justice, resiliency, education, and community nourishment. The Knoll is a place where people flourish as much as food, where connection between the students and the wider community becomes reciprocal, and where learning, service, and transformation take place daily. The Knoll's twentieth anniversary is in 2023, and in honor of this upcoming celebration and all that has become over the past twenty years we would like to share what we love about The Knoll.

The Knoll's story is one of commitment.Volunteers composed of students and community members created the garden from the ground up. Dedicated students, faculty and staff have kept the garden growing for the last twenty years with immense labor, love, and generosity. Over a hundred student interns have tended the land through the seasons, overseen by three consecutive Food and Garden Educators and countless student volunteers during the school years.

If you haven't been, we highly encourage you to take a stroll around. Right off the TAM and Route 30, The Knoll is a beautiful spot on a hill, surrounded by a green marshy expanse and flanked by views of the College and the Adirondacks. Feel free to meander through the garden, smell the flowers and harvest from the Grazing Garden — the circular garden dedicated to communal nourishment. Rooting in place is vital to understanding, and our words can only do so much to represent The Knoll. This place radiates love.

The Knoll is currently overseen by Food and Garden Educator, Megan Brakeley '06, and a dedicated group of student interns through the spring, summer and fall. Volunteer hours are offered multiple times a week in the spring and fall, and last year nearly 300 sign-up slots were filled by students. These devoted hands nourish a garden that provides for the campus through a partnership with Dining Halls and Crossroads Café. The garden also provides for the greater Vermont community through various community partnerships including HOPE and the Nulhegan Food Security Project. In 2021, the Knoll grew over 3,000 pounds of produce that was distributed by HOPE, over 1,000 pounds more than the year before. For the Nulhegan Food Security Project, the Knoll grew about 300 pounds of produce, in both 2020 and 2021. The Knoll also has a long standing partnership with Cornwall Elementary School, welcoming the third graders weekly for five weeks each fall, engaging them in gardening, soil ecology and more.

The Knoll is also a site of restoration, providing space for the betterment of students' mental and physical wellness. In 2021, 36 students received PE credits at the Knoll through volunteer hours. This space is one of the college's most popular ways for students to move their bodies in ways that feel good while being outside and engaging intentionally with their landscape while working towards feeding the community.

Along with food production, the Knoll is an important gathering site for the campus community. In 2020, the Knoll hosted 25 events and 32 days of educational programming. In 2021, over 55 official college events were hosted at the garden. Knoll staff also plant and manage an annual experiment for 40 students for a Natural Science Environmental Studies lab class. The Knoll reaches the larger Middlebury community, by hosting or assisting with year-round events such as reunions, Fall Family Weekends, Bread Loaf Commencement, Language Schools, Alumni College, MiddView, Early Arrival programming and countless others. In the summer of 2022, the School of Abenaki held class at The Knoll and marked the beginning of a partnership through ceremony and plantings of sweetgrass.

As Middlebury students, many of us pride ourselves on attending a school that is awake to the intensity of the ongoing climate crisis. We choose Middlebury and Vermont because we are biologists and activists, artists and gardeners, builders and collaborators who crave a place to share, learn, and serve resilience. The Knoll is where students can come together through our differences, speak truthfully and do work that directly impacts our fellow students, staff, and local community. Justice is rooted in listening, acting with heart and gaining genuine comprehension of context. Many students choose to go to The Knoll because it offers a place to truly practice climate justice and find community in the wake of the climate crisis.

Middlebury College students have demonstrated a strong and growing interest in learning about food systems in the classroom, too. According to the Food Studies Department, since the creation of the Food Studies minor in 2020, twenty students have declared and eight more intend to. Additionally, ten students are pursuing or have completed Independent Scholar tracks on food-related subjects. Extracurricularly, hundreds of students have engaged with local food issues through Weybridge House. An average of forty students gather there weekly for community dinners, while over two hundred students come to the Weybridge Feast each year. These meals are open to the whole Middlebury community and consist of produce grown within 30 miles, much of which is sourced from The Knoll. There is clear demand for engagement with food justice from students, particularly since we live in Vermont where the strong agricultural focus provides community nourishment and radical possibility. We know that food lies at the center of climate, labor, economic, political, and social issues. Studying food systems is an avenue for students to gain an interdisciplinary understanding of the world. As climate change exposes the faults in our food production systems, students are realizing that reimagining these systems is vital to building resilient communities. This growing student interest stresses how food is not just a conversation for agricultural schools and programs, but vital everyday for each of us.

The Knoll is also an important BIPOC affinity space. In the U.S., agriculture and food systems are impacted by the violent processes of colonization and slavery. Simultaneously, there is a pressing need to acknowledge and honor the agricultural roots of many Black, Indigenous and other people of color, and foster exploration and reconnection with students' personal and ancestral histories to land and food. The Knoll has consistently emerged as a central space for students to hold this history and imagine what the future of our food systems might look like. In community, The Knoll is co-creating a space that allows us to dive into the complexities of imagining futures where co-existence, solidarity, and justice are abundant. The numerous BIPOC affinity spaces organized by Megan Brakeley, in collaboration with the Anderson Freeman Center and the Nulhegan Band of the Abenaki point to the interdisciplinary, hands-on work underway at the Knoll. Among other BIPOC oriented events, The Knoll also hosts First@Midd gatherings in the beginning of academic years, held space for a bouquet making workshop for the AFC's "Bridgerton Bunch" which is an affinity space for women and femmes of color on campus, and hosted a Kimchi making workshop with RAISINs. A field trip was also coordinated to Soul Fire Farm in New York State which is an Afro-indigenous community farm committed to decolonizing and seeding sovereignty in the food system. These all point to the community-connected experiential learning that The Knoll is dedicated to. In a state where BIPOC representation in farming and agriculture is so limited, taking up space in the garden has opened doors for so many BIPOC students to explore environmentalism and community-building while breaking down perceptions of who belongs on farms. The Knoll's interdisciplinary focus on food and organizing gives BIPOC students a radical space to feel joy and learn vital skills to benefit whole communities.

The Knoll's Twentieth Anniversary will be celebrated throughout 2023. It is truly remarkable how much The Knoll has grown over the past twenty years through dedication, collaboration, and resilience. We look forward to inviting alumni who helped create The Knoll, past student interns who have cared for the land, and the many community members without whom The Knoll would not exist to join in this celebration. The Knoll is an important site for the College's Energy 2028 goals and the climate resiliency work that Middlebury is known for and the anniversary presents the opportunity to highlight this work and that of students and professors who meet and exceed sustainability goals. We hope to invite more Middlebury community members to The Knoll to celebrate this abundance with us, and we seek community support and excitement as we make these plans. We look forward to the ways The Knoll can continue being a site of nourishment, education, gathering, and joy for many more years to come.

COURTESY OF ARIA BOWDEN

TAKING CARE INTO OUR OWN HANDS

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

During the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic, Middlebury students were frequently granted additional flexibility and room for self-care. From the expanded Credit/No Credit grading system to more lax due dates and "freebie" late days, there was infrastructure in place to grant more space to students when they were struggling.

However, many of these support structures are now forgotten relics, and the dissolution of them seems to imply to students that their academic performance must trump anything and everything else, no matter the cost. Gone are the days when students could miss class or get extensions without having to provide a "valid" excuse. Now, some professors are saying that there are no reasons why students should miss class.

The notion of "returning to normal" has exacerbated an increasing sense of pressure for students. Take fall "break" for example: students who opted to put work aside and actually take a break found themselves drowning in assignments, as professors had set due dates on the Sunday and Monday following break.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the college has removed resources and fallbacks that allowed students to practice self-care and balance on their own terms. Now that we are halfway through the semester, many students are finding themselves without the means to grant themselves grace. While a bottom-up, student-centric approach to care cannot replace institutional structures that support mental health, there are still ways to find balance through community.

While we as a Board tend to avoid bestowing advice — after all, we're students who are struggling too — we came together this week to discuss the ways in which we've been able to stay afloat even when the college has thrown us into the deep end, sans life jacket. We hope that some of these suggestions might resonate with students and particularly underclassmen who are experiencing the novel challenges of college work-life balance in the "post-pandemic" era.

Destigmatize asking for help

We get it — requesting an extension or admitting that you are struggling can sometimes feel like a personal failure. But over the years it's become evident that no one else, whether that be deans, professors, or peers, is making any sort of judgment about our character or work ethic. Being our own worst critics can often prevent students from getting help. In addition, we've found that, if given enough of a heads up, are more than happy to grant extensions. Sometimes, getting up the courage to ask in the first place can be a major step.

Practice learning how to be alone

After Middlebury, most of us will not have access to people around us 24/7. Many upperclassmen editors noted they were grateful for alone time and being able to be more independent without the social anxiety that may accompany eating or studying alone. Learning how to be alone without being lonely takes practice and comes with time, but once you do get there, it's a lot less stressful when you don't feel as if you have to plan out every hour of your day with people. Some editors noted that despite the initial unease, going to events and club meetings where they didn't know anyone actually ended up being surprisingly fulfilling and rewarding.

Accept and embrace the fluidity of friendships

It's OK to move on from friendships that no longer serve you. This doesn't mean a major falling out or fight has to happen — people change and that's normal. Trying to force relationships that no longer make sense in the grand scheme of things can be stressful. Granting yourself the space to prioritize yourself and your needs is critical, and makes balancing academics and extracurriculars more feasible. Making new, close friends as an upperclassman is more common than you might think, and being open to change allows your relationships to evolve as you do.

You don't need to make up for lost time

After semesters perceived as "lost" to the pandemic, many students are feeling the pressure to not turn down any social opportunities that they couldn't experience in previous years. "It can feel like a disservice to oneself to not take advantage of every opportunity for social interaction," we wrote last fall in an editorial. "[But] these internal and external pressures to take advantage of the 'return to normal' only add to preexisting societal forces that claim college needs to be the best four years of your life." This line of thinking can easily cause students to burnout quicker and compare themselves to others who they may perceive to be "making the most of college". It's more than OK to do what you need, whether that be going out, or not going out, or doing work, or not doing work. There obviously has been so much loss in the last few years, but this does not necessitate running yourself into the ground in pursuit of what you've lost.

Overall, there is no one-size-fits-all experience for self-care. But we do recognize that being intentional about balance is critical now that the days of college-sanctioned flexibility seem far gone.

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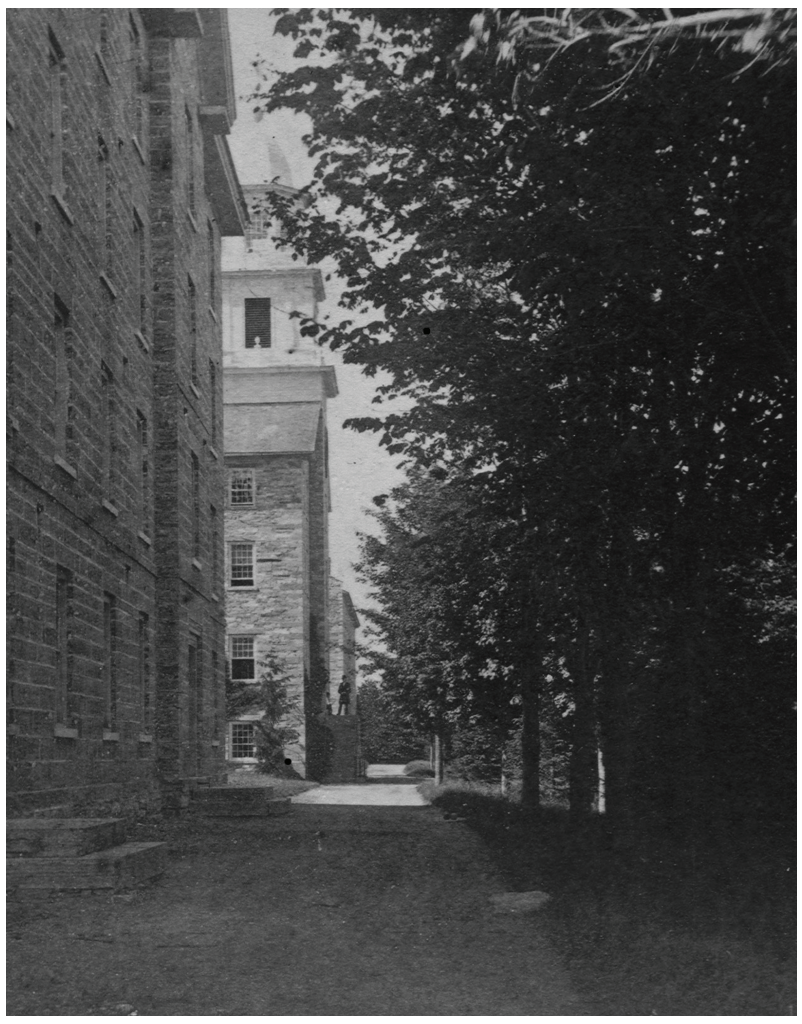
FROM THE ARCHIVES: A BRIEF HISTORY OF OLD STONE ROW

By TULIP LARSON
Contributing Writer



Courtesy of Middlebury special collections

"From the Archives" is an opportunity for various writers to visit the Middlebury Special Collections and write about a different artifact each week. The Special Collections boasts over 10,000 historic items, and through this column we encourage writers to explore not only the college's history, but also the history of the world around us.

Surrounded by Vermont granite and a quaint village, it can feel as though Middlebury College exists outside the throes of time, preserved for all eternity in its autumnal glory. Yet despite this feeling that Middlebury serves as a historic snapshot of the past, students rarely stop to think about what life was like throughout the college's history. Though students pass the three oldest buildings on campus nearly every day on walks to and from the Davis Family Library, it is easy to ignore their significance. However, for those seeking to dive deeper into Middlebury's early history, Middlebury Special Collections displays photos taken by local photographer O.C. Barnes which paint a colorful (albeit black and white) picture of Middlebury in its nascent years. Although little information is known about these particular photos, they act as a lens into Middlebury College's oldest history.

Painter Hall, named after the college's founder Gamaliel Painter, was the college's first official building. Upon its completion in 1816, the building fulfilled the duties of residential hall, dining hall, gym, library and classroom all at once. Although today it is often dismissed as a less-desirable residence hall, if you take a close look at Painter, you can find remnants of its storied history still present. Located on the eastern side of the building, a small plaque commemorates the founding of Middlebury's first fraternity, Kappa Delta Rho, in 1905. By the 1920s, KDR moved from Painter to 48 South Street, but it was terminated by the college as a co-educational social house in 2015.

The second building of Old Stone Row is Old Chapel, which was completed in 1836. Old Chapel was commissioned in order to free up Painter Hall as strictly dormitory space since the college had grown to roughly 160 students by the 1830s. When it was first built, the bottom floor of Old Chapel housed a library and mineralogy museum; the second floor held classrooms; and the third floor, a two-story-high chapel. At the time of its construction, fir trees were planted to line Old Chapel's entryway, rendering it almost unrecognizable to the modern onlooker, as seen in O.C. Barnes' photograph. In 1883, the Chapel's gallery became a reading room, and was the first location on campus that allowed for co-ed studying. Today, Old Chapel serves primarily as administrative offices, including President Laurie Patton's office.

Thirty years after Old Chapel, Starr Hall was built, completing Old Stone Row in 1860. While plans for Starr had been in the works since the completion of Old Chapel, Middlebury suffered a loss of popularity and enrollment during the 1840s and 50s when students revolted against the administration's harsh religious revival. A map from the Special Collections informs us that there were only six faculty members and 63 students attending Middlebury in 1850, nearly 100 students less than in the early 1830s. However, despite this temporary dip in popularity, Starr Hall was finally completed in 1860, creating more residence space for students. Unfortunately, only four years later, Starr Hall burned down on Christmas night and had to be rebuilt. Despite this rebuild, Starr was neglected for the better part of two decades. Because of the Civil War and more internal administration problems, the student body of Middlebury waned to a low of 38 students in 1880. Thankfully, President Ezra Brainerd took office in 1885 and revitalized the school. He worked to build Middlebury College's popularity, broaden the liberal arts curriculum, expand the endowment and build new facilities. By the early 1900s, Starr finally resembled its current form.

CONFIDENCE IS THE BEST REVENGE: A REVIEW OF TAYLOR SWIFT'S "MIDNIGHTS"

By ERIC BURCHILL
Digital Director

Courtesy Photo

Midnights was released on Oct. 21, 2022

Taylor Swift simply can't not top herself, and she proved that on her synth-pop-focused 10th studio album, "Midnights." How can she out-do the most awarded country and pop albums of all time, a historic three Album of the Year wins at the Grammys and the highest grossing U.S. stadium tour in history, you ask? Well, she does it by doing what she's always done: writing razor-sharp lyrics paired with carefully-curated production elements to develop ever-evolving bodies of work, each one more exciting than the last. Many people felt she couldn't possibly improve upon the emotionally-ambitious, indie-folk surprise albums "folklore" and "evermore," but with "Midnights," she proved that emotional depth and intelligent songwriting don't have to be sacrificed at the cost of upbeat pop production.

It's no secret that Taylor Swift has a star power unlike anyone else on the planet today. "Midnights" sold over 800,000 copies on its first day alone, Billboard reported, already making it the highest selling album of 2022. It also has the biggest overall week in equivalent album units since Swift's own "reputation" in 2017, and it is projected to be the first album to debut with over a million copies in the post-bundling era, in which a rule change forced artists to rely less on pure sales and more on streaming. Somehow, she accomplished all of this with nothing but hype, since she didn't release any singles before the album dropped in its entirety at midnight on Oct. 21.

A perennial facet of Swift's catalog is her uncanny ability to sing the most dramatic lyrics with unflinching confidence, so that instead of coming off as corny or melodramatic, they are self-assured and absolutely sincere. Remember, this is the woman who scored one of her first big hits with a song analogizing a teenage fling to the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet in 2008's "Love Story" and declared that the "Old Taylor" is dead in 2017's "Look What You Made Me Do." On "Midnights," she sings, "karma is a cat, purring in my lap 'cause it loves me" with her whole chest, and it actually works, making track 11, "Karma," my current favorite on the album. Rivaling "Karma" in my rankings is track 8, "Vigilante Shit," where she sings her most Instagram caption-worthy lyric in years: "I don't start shit but I can tell you how it ends." It doesn't take a music theorist to see that the song's sizzling dark production almost certainly takes inspiration from Billie Eilish. On previous albums, track 5 has always included Swift's most vulnerable writing. Yet on her most uplifting track 5 to date, "You're on Your Own, Kid" she sings, "make the friendship bracelets, take the moment and taste it." But behind her words is a certain melancholy, making this advice not that of a sunny-eyed schoolteacher, but of a young woman living with regret.

One of the most remarkable feats of this record is how realistically Swift portrays the human experience of self-love. No matter who you are, everybody hates themselves sometimes, and Swift captures this perfectly with lyrics like "I'll stare directly at the sun but never in the mirror" and "I wake up screaming from dreaming someday I'll watch as you're leaving" in lead single and consummate earworm "Anti-Hero." Complex vocal layering in this track makes these late-night confessions feel like a warm hug to anyone who's ever spent their midnights regretting life decisions. Fortunately, Swift understands that this uncertainty is completely natural, and she owns it in album closer "Mastermind," where instead of hiding her self-proclaimed Machiavellianism, she embraces it, singing "No one wanted to play with me as a little kid, so I've been scheming like a criminal ever since." Swift also goes to emotional places she hasn't dared venture before in thumping indie-rock ballad "Would've, Could've, Should've." She cries "Give me back my girlhood, it was mine first" with her most emotional vocal delivery since 2010's "Last Kiss."

I must discuss the controversial elephant in the room that is track 4, "Snow on the Beach." Sure, it is a bit of a letdown that we didn't get a proper duet between Swift and featured artist Lana Del Rey, but the extreme negative reaction this song is receiving is disrespectful to Del Rey's talent. Any fan of Swift or Del Rey knows that songwriting is both's top priority. To suggest that this song is an utter failure because Del Rey doesn't sing her own verse ignores what this song set out to accomplish: a meeting of the minds of two of the best songwriters — in my opinion — of this generation. They crafted this song together, meaning Del Rey had input on how much she sang on the track. If she felt sidelined, she would have stepped away. It is abundantly clear that Swift has nothing but respect for Del Rey, and hopefully we get another collaboration sometime in the future.

In true Swiftian form, attention to detail is really what brings the "stories of 13 sleepless nights" theme to life. In the outro of track 10 "Labyrinth," distorted vocals create a dream-like state as she sings about her fears of falling in love again. Lyrics like "you would break your back to make me break a smile" are a huge loss for single people everywhere, but a win for Swift, who is clearly more in love than ever before. As the reliable narrator she is, however, she is always sure to include the darker shades of her relationship. On track 6 "Midnight Rain," she hearkens back to an old flame: "I never think of him except on midnights like this," wondering what could have been. On track 9 and album standout "Bejeweled," she feels compelled to remind her lover that she could drop him at any moment should he fail to recognize just how powerful she is. Somehow, this message feels like more than just a warning to her boyfriend: it's a reminder to fans and haters alike about how she's standing stronger than ever before after over 16 years in the music industry.

THE WHITE PORCH SHOW: A MIDDLEBURY SUMMER PRODUCTION

By KATE SADOFF
Contributing Writer

Oct. 22 marked the world premiere of "The White Porch Show," a 12-part sketch comedy series made through the collaborative efforts of Middlebury College comedy enthusiasts. In formal attire, fans and critics alike gathered in Axinn to watch the compilation of sketches filmed over the summer.

Following in the footsteps of "The Deli People," a web series made in 2021 by Middlebury alumni Cole Merrell '21 and Jacob Morton '21, "The White Porch Show" is the product of passionate members of Middlebury's comedy scene, whose work was made possible by a MiddChallenge grant. David Factor '23, Emma Tzotchew '23.5, Maddie Van Beek '22.5 and Basil Alfaro '22 were awarded $4,000 to create the web-series and were given an office space in Old Stone Mill, which became their writers' room.

Over the summer, the four students rented a house on Weybridge Street, colloquially known to students as "White Porch," a name that ultimately provided titular inspiration for the series. They lived down the street from their office, and most of them coincidentally worked at American Flatbread.

Tzotzchew, who assumed multiple roles, including contributing writer and actress, remarked that close quarters were essential to the show's evolution. "Through living together and working together, we had creative synthesis within the same 200 feet. It transitioned from our initial idea into something that is more focused on the individual sketches, without a story arc, which allowed for more of the writing voice to come through and for us to use our environment in a way that made sense," Tzotzchew said.

The show is satirical in nature, with multiple sketches using Vermont culture as a basis for its humor. Highlights included a scene of a primitivist emerging from the woods to engage with a local political organizer, or a song and dance devoted to kitschy refrigerator magnets. Community members from the town of Middlebury were happy to aid the project, allowing the students to utilize familiar locations, like the Marquis Theater, the Desebrais Laundromat and The Vermont Book Shop. What began just as a collaboration between college students quickly became one between the college and the greater community.

From the moment the catchy intro plays — courtesy of Middlebury's own Joshua Jane Music and Bottle Rocket Band — it is evident that "The White Porch Show" is not your average student project. The production quality is of professional caliber. Van Beek was the director of cinematography and head of equipment and post-production. Van Beek edited all reels, turning two-to-eight-hour-long shoots into polished and concise scenes.

"It's not embarrassing, which as far as student films go, is a pretty high mark to hit. If people don't like it, it won't be because it doesn't look good; it will be because of the humor," said head writer Factor.

It is challenging to estimate the total number of students involved. Between the writing team, actors, extras, crew, guest-stars and others, the production must have included upwards of 20 people. Though there was chaos with so many different people involved, the making of "The White Porch Show" went relatively smoothly, with no reported catastrophes or setbacks. That isn't to say it wasn't hard — the variety of voices often lent itself to creative difference.

"Everybody wanted a really high-quality final product, so we had our goofs and gaffs, but we were also constantly writing and rewriting sketches," said contributing writer Jonah Joseph '24.

The unanimous drive for a strong final product kept everyone working on the same team, with creative ambition and passion being the lifeline of the project. Many of the students involved even wish to go into the entertainment industry.

The production of "The White Porch Show," which Tzotchew considers "a microcosm of Hollywood," has provided students with tangible working experience to rely on post-Middlebury. The creators do not see this project as a "one and done." They are eager for feedback so that they can continue to work toward their individual goals in the industry.

"We want to get feedback from people who don't know us...whatever the feedback is it will be helpful going forward. I want people to share it with the weirdest person they know, someone you're not in close contact with. I want feedback from the people you never talk to... Send it to your ex," Factor said.

On Oct. 29, the full cut will be released on YouTube, followed by the release of the individual sketches. The show can be accessed and shared on the channel "The White Porch Show."

COURTESY OF MADDIE VAN BEEK '22.5

Radio Roundup: Tunes to get you off on the right foot

By WRMC EXEC BOARD

Have your Spotify playlists become stale? Is your weekly mix just not cutting it? Maybe it's time to branch out and listen to something new. The Executive Board of WRMC, Middlebury College's radio station, has selected a wonderfully wide range of albums, spanning time and genre, for your listening pleasure. Check out these recommendations and let them become the soundtrack to your semester.

*RIYL (recommended if you like)

Library Manager's Pick — Kyle Hooker '24

Album: Track Record, by Joan Armatrading
Genre: Folk, Rock
RIYL: Ricki Lee Jones, Suzanne Vega, k.d. Lang
Blurb: Joan Armatrading's unique style crosses several genres, from folk to jazz to blues, and it is complete with beautiful vocals and instrumental solos. There are several great tracks on this album, including "Love and Affection, "Down to Zero" and "Drop the Pilot."

Social Media Manager's Pick — Georgia Perlah '25

Album: Let Go by Nada Surf
Genre: Alt Rock
RIYL: Pavement, Built To Spill, Radiohead, The National
Blurb: Following their rise to fame with the 1996 song "Popular," "Let Go" by Nada Surf is a quintessential alternative rock album with a few more mellow and melodic tracks. "Let Go" is much more lyrical than previous work. The tracks "Blonde on Blonde" and "Blizzard of '77" are a few stand-outs.

Co-Programming Director's Pick — Dan Frazo '23

Album: Calm Down – Ari Roar
Genre: Dream Pop
RIYL: Worn-Tin, Voxtrot, Old Built to Spill
Blurb: Texan singer-songwriter Ari Roar's debut album is a charismatic blend of 1960s pop melodies and modern punk rhythms. Seeing Roar come into stride after a series of popular singles, the album features a number of confidently agitated tunes, the lyrics and instrumentals of which create an unnerving dissonance to the attentive listener (see "Don't Have a Fit," "Implode"). Despite the album's short 28-min runtime (in 15 songs wow!), Roar finds a way to weave fun-loving dreamscape narratives into an otherwise emotionally challenging album.

Spring Music Director's Pick – Grace Augspurger '25

Album: Sweep It Into Space by Dinosaur Jr.
Genre: Alternative Rock
RIYL: Nirvana, Pixies, The Smashing Pumpkins
Blurb:Dinosaur Jr.'s second album after their 2006 reunion has much less grunge and more pop-rock sound than their classics. As in the rest of their post-1997 albums, bassist Lou Barlow has two songs of his own, "The Garden" and "You Wonder," which are my personal favorites. "Take It Back" has a wonderful, classic Dinosaur Jr. claymation music video. In general Dinosaur Jr.'s reunion has been received well by original fans, and is considered one of the most successful in alternative rock. Their sound is unique, melodic in a Black Sabbath kind of way and depressing in a Radiohead way, and this is maintained in their newer releases.

Co-Concert Director's Pick— Luke Robins '23

Album: Awakening by Hiroshi Sato
Genre: Jazz Fusion/Synth Pop
RIYL: Miki Matsubara, Anri, Mort Garson
Blurb: This groovy 1982 album from Hiroshi Sato walks the line between synth pop and jazz fusion. It opens with "Awakening," a soft instrumental track with piano and spacey synth that clears the way and the mind for the catchy pop melodies which make up the rest of this album. "Say Goodbye" and "Can't Wait" are two standouts that promise to be stuck in your head the rest of the day.

PIA CONTRERAS

Tech Director's Pick — Jonah Landsman '24

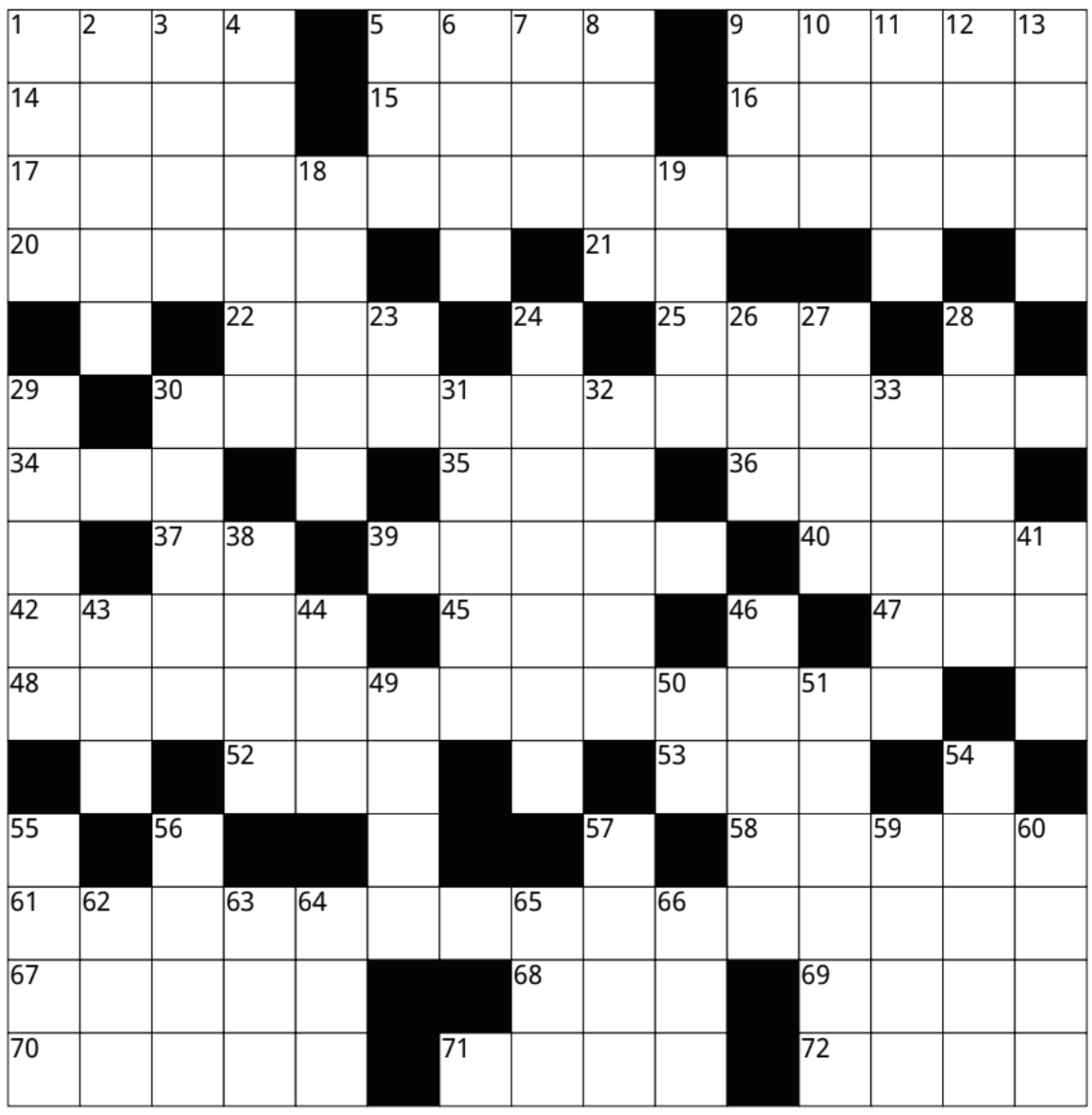
Album: The Jungle Is the Only Way Out by Mereba
Genre: R&B/Soul
RIYL: BENEE, Kali Uchis, 6LACK
Blurb: Mereba's mostly self-produced 2019 studio debut remains an undisputed classic and regular member of my rotation. Led by precise synth, Mereba's melancholy vocals make TJIOWO soothing and complex. Highlights include "Stay Tru," "Planet U" and "Heatwave."

GM's Pick — Gennie Herron '23

Album: Midnights by Taylor Swift
Genre: pop, good music
RIYL: Taylor Swift, Maggie Rogers,
Blurb: It's a good one. I didn't know what toIt's a good one. I didn't know what to expect with this album, but I have been really enjoying it. It's fun, kind of sassy and very danceable with some lyrics that you have to listen to many times to tease out all the little bits. My favorites thus far, considering it came out on Friday, are "Lavender Haze," "Anti-Hero," "Midnight Rain" and "Karma." Swift is incredibly prolific. She just cranks out material. Overall, I really like this album and yes, I think I have listened through it about five times.

SPOOKY-ISH CROSSWORD

By WILLIAM REED & HAYDEN HUNSKOR
Layout Editor and Contributing Writer



Across

1 Hagrid's dog
5 He has a moving castle
9 Snapchat mascot
14 Pelvic bones
15 Car
16 Creepy
17 Freemasons, Illuminati, e.g.
20 What ghosts do
21 Computer company
22 A Larry David-ism
25 Klutz
30 Coffee specification
34 Feathery accessory
35 "If you ask me..." in texts
36 Ship's front
37 Booze-free, abbr.
39 End of an era?
40 Oxen's harness
42 Hater, on the internet
45 Outdated web portal
47 Lair for bears
48 "This place gives me the creeps!"
52 "____ takers?"
53 Decorative vase
58 Mythical baby carrier
61 Gandhi's birthday
67 Apparition
68 A stronger drink, abbr.
69 Easter Island statues (big heads)
70 Easy _____
71 Halloween cover-up
72 "Place your _____"

Down

1 Tilapia, eg.
2 Take _____ of faith
3 Preemie's ward, for short
4 Actress Jennifer
5 Fedora or fez
6 Remove from power
7 Intl. commerce group
8 Scot's swimming spot
9 "Golly!"
10 Prefix for -erogenous (Will and Hayden couldn't think of anything else)
11 "Pics ___ didn't happen!"
12 "Sprechen ___ Deutsch?"
13 Final, for one
18 Bygone anesthetic
19 Nano for one
23 x2 it's a laugh
24 Made a brief appearance
26 Venomous snake
27 Alecto, Megaera or Tisiphone
28 Actor Ethan
29 "Splish splash, I was takin' ____" (1958 lyric)
30 Kayak alternative
31 Trinidadian rapper
32 Duke or Earl, e.g.
33 Merchandise
38 Actress Jessica of "Sin City"
41 Finish
43 Hi-____ image
44 Manuel-Miranda
46 Top spot
49 Looked at
50 University whose bridge is one of three in the world where a plane can fly over a car driving over a train traveling over a boat
51 Bury
54 Halloween option
55 Golf org.
56 "Rent-____": 1988 film
57 Steals from
59 Double-reed instrument
60 Kringle's given name
62 Canadian interjection, plural
63 "Yes," in French
64 Rapper Choppa
65 Public health org.
66 Legal office worker, abbr.

NICHE READS: NOVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHYSICS MAJORS

By SYLVIE SHURE
Contributing Writer

If you struggle to find time for fun reading, this is the spot for you! Niche Reads recommends novels that relate to academic (or other) interests so that you can explore a new book while still feeling productive. Check each week back for more cool books!

When science and literature collide, the results are almost always interesting. The three following works focus on physics, combining their scientific subject matter with the more subjective traditions of literature. They're all relatively short, with unique humor being a hallmark of each.

While physics students might particularly like these pieces, they're great for anyone who's looking for a short, funny and thought-provoking escape from their schoolwork.

"Arcadia" by Tom Stoppard

Set in one room in the English countryside and alternating between the present day and 1809, "Arcadia" is a play about physics, humanity and destiny. In 1809, a precocious young girl develops a precursor to chaos theory, while her tutor, along with his unseen friend Lord Byron, finds himself embroiled in scandal. In the present day, two researchers try to decode that chapter of the house's history. One focuses on an elusive hermit who lived on the grounds, while the other attempts to prove that Lord Byron killed a rival poet in a duel.

Full of wit and intrigue, "Arcadia" investigates, among many other themes, the relationship between reason and passion. How, it asks, can a mathematical model account for human irrationalities? Examining the unpredictability of sex, pride and anger, "Arcadia" is a compelling and at times absurd story, with a beautiful interplay between past and present.

Being a play, it's a shorter time commitment than a novel and ideal for the busy physics student. Packed with witty dialogue and vivid characters, you'll be glad you picked it up.

You should read this play if you like British humor, if you're interested in the intersection of romanticism and reason or if you enjoy sharp dialogue.

"Project Hail Mary" by Andy Weir

In the near future, Dr. Ryland Grace wakes up alone on a spaceship. He doesn't remember who sent him into space or why, but it certainly seems crucial that he figures it out, and quickly.

"Project Hail Mary" is a tight, exhilarating mystery. Without any spoilers, it's hard to say much about the plot, but it is endlessly inventive and leans delightfully into the "science" side of science-fiction. If you've read "The Martian," then you're familiar with Weir's style: funny, surprising and well-researched. While it's longer than the other two books on this list, "Project Hail Mary" is a fun read that flies by.

"Project Hail Mary" will keep you on the edge of your seat. This book is one you don't want spoiled, so you'll have to trust that it's worth the ride. Without saying too much, the main threat in this book is one of the most imaginative and entertaining adversaries you'll find in science-fiction. Suffice it to say, the world's at stake.

You should read this book if you like mysteries, if you appreciate humor in your books or if you're interested in scientific mechanisms.

"Cat's Cradle" by Kurt Vonnegut

If you haven't yet read this clIf you haven't yet read this classic book, the time is now. The narrator of "Cat's Cradle" is on a mission to write a profile of Felix Hoenikker, the late creator of the atomic bomb. Quickly, however, he learns that Hoenikker also invented a compound called ice-nine, which has the power to instantly freeze anything it touches. What's worse, small particles of ice-nine are loose in the world, in the hands of Hoenikker's three children.

"Cat's Cradle" is a short, ridiculous satire about science — particularly the use of science for destruction — and religion. In some ways, the novel has aged poorly, but it's still a delicious read and a sharp social commentary. Some highlights include Vonnegut's sense of humor and the imaginary religion of Bokononism.

With its brisk, memorable chapters, "Cat's Cradle" will get you thinking without taking too much time from your studies. The idea of ice-nine, a fantastical seed crystal, should be especially captivating for physics majors.

You should read this book if you like satire, if you don't mind some dark humor or if you're looking for a quicker read.

PFL Weekly

By COLE SIEFER, DAN URCHUK, SAM MCGARRAHAN, BEN WAGNER
Podcast Hosts

No. 3-ranked Middlebury men's tennis goes 11–3 at the Dartmouth Invitational as Neel Epstein '25, Robby Ward '23.5 and Julian Wu '26 each win all three of their matches. Football improves to 5–1 with a monster 40–28 win at Bates College, as Donovan Wood '24 takes the lead in NESCAC scoring. Field hockey wins at Tufts University, and the PFL team catches up with starting defender Emily Stone '25, who talks about coming back from a tough loss against Trinity College last week and the role of leadership. The cross country teams take the weekend off as they prepare for the upcoming NESCAC championship. Men's golf finishes second out of 23 at the NEIGA championship in Maine, while the women's squad takes second out of 11. Men's and women's soccer both tie at Tufts. Stay tuned for more info about the upcoming NESCAC playoffs.

CAROLINE HARDING

FIELD HOCKEY'S 42-GAME STREAK COMES TO AN END

By LEXI LINAFELTER
Sports Editor

Heading into this season, Middlebury field hockey was set to defend their title as national champions, the newly resurfaced Peter Kohn Field, their conference trophy and their seemingly never-ending win streak. Updates to the leaderboard this year have continued to confirm the program's hegemony, highlighting an ongoing undefeated record unlike any before by the NCAA.

However, Oct. 15 marked the end of an era; the Panther's 42-game win streak, also a 51-game streak on Kohn Field at home, was struck down in a NESCAC matchup on senior day by No. 7 Trinity College.

A goal from Middlebury's Amy Griffin'24.5 kept the Panthers in the game through the second half after an early lead by Trinity, but the Bantams took a 2–1 lead with 8:10 left in the fourth quarter. In their final effort to stay afloat, the Panther's were unable to find the back of the goal despite five penalty corner opportunities in the final 1:08, solidifying a massive upset and many Middlebury players' first loss in their college careers.

Both the Middlebury community and fans of NCAA DIII field hockey have focused heavily on adding another tally to the board: another win, another title, another broken record. However, according to senior and team captain Grace Murphy '23, winning streaks are highly overstated when looking at a team's postseason prospects.

"Keeping everyone's focus off any score and instead on the quality of the game we are playing and doing the little things consistently well in practice has always been this team's approach," she said.

To better understand what leadership looks like when faced with such a unique challenge, Murphy provided insight into the team's outlook and messaging going forward.

"Throughout the past week Grace Harlan '22.5, Riley Marchin '22.5 and myself have been focusing on reminding the team why we're all here," Murphy said. "We're here because we love the game. Remembering that we play for each other, for our coaches, for ourselves and for the joy that all that brings."

The team is now focused on what's ahead. The tradition of the program and their truly remarkable accomplishments so far this season seem to be only a glimpse of what this roster can do. From former NESCAC Rookies of the Year Katie George '23.5 and Griffin to this year's emerging stars on the astroturf, the team is packed with talent. Murphy was full of praise for everyone's effort and commitment to the team and the game.

"This past week we got back to our basics and also remembered to not take ourselves so seriously," she said.

The Panthers already have secured another decisive NESCAC victory since the loss, and it is clear that Murphy and her teammates are hopeful and hungry as postseason quickly approaches. The 4–0 shut-out against Tufts exhibited full confidence in all that makes Middlebury field hockey unique, highlighted by two goals from Caroline Segal '24 and one save by goalie Harlan. The win also moved Harlan into second place in Middlebury's all-time records with 19 shutouts.

The book may be closed on Middlebury's longest ever win streak, but one thing holds true: there is plenty left to defend this season, and this team has all of the firepower and finesse they need to get it done.

Field hockey (14–1) faced their final regular season matchup against no. 10 Williams (11–4) Tuesday, Oct. 25 at Kohn Field. The team won 4–1. This was the team's Pride home game, played in honor of athletes, fans, coaches and administrators who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Panthers headed to the playoffs

By CHARLES CROUNSE
Senior Sports Editor

The many pumpkins, leaf piles and spooky decorations around campus don't just signify Halloween; for Middlebury athletics, they signify that the end of the regular season is drawing near, and the simultaneously nerve wracking yet exhilarating prospect of the postseason is nearly upon us. With just a few short weeks remaining in most team's seasons, here is a look at how teams are faring heading into the postseason.

Men's football

The football team (5–1) is enjoying a stellar season, thanks in no small part to Donovan Wood '24's league-leading eight touchdown receptions and the 53 total sacks by Finn Muldoon '23.5. The Panthers sit second in the NESCAC, just one game behind undefeated Trinity. With games against Colby (4–2), Hamilton (2–4) and Tufts (3–3) left to go, it is imperative the Panthers stick to winning ways to put pressure on the Bantams. With no playoffs at the conclusion of the regular season, Middlebury stands a real chance to reclaim the NESCAC title they last won back in 2019.

Women's field hockey

The 8–1 Panthers still top the NESCAC in spite of a surprise defeat at the hands of Trinity two weekends ago. Their famous winning streak faltered after a historic 42-game run, the longest in the program's history, but spirits remain high in Middlebury's camp. Amy Griffin '24.5 currently leads the NESCAC in points with 41 to her name (15 goals, 11 assists), and Grace Harlan '22.5 is second in the league with four shutouts this season (the team has a total of six shutouts). The Panthers may have shown they are still human, but they remain the top ranked team in the nation and should be the favorites to claim both the NESCAC and NCAA titles.

Women's volleyball

The women's volleyball team (13–8) currently sits at 4–4 in NESCAC play and, as things stand now, holds the middle of the pack heading into the playoffs. Momentum is certainly with the team, as they have won seven of their last eight games, five of which were 3–0 shutouts. Gabbie O'Toole '25 currently leads the league in assists with a comfortable eight-point margin over her nearest opponent and recently pocketed the NESCAC player of the week award for her efforts. Kelly Ferrero '23.5 also leads the conference in digs. The Panthers have a big game coming up against the 7–1 Wesleyan before a potentially must-win matchup against the 3–5 Trinity to conclude their regular season. If the Panthers can keep their momentum going, they may have timed their peak to perfection as they enter the playoffs.

Women's soccer

The women's soccer team occupied fourth in the league with one game to go at press time, facing off with the second-placed Williams in their final match of the season. The Panthers have clinched a playoff berth but will be hoping to score a high seed heading into the postseason, which could also give them home-field advantage in the early rounds. The NESCAC defending champions are currently on a five-game unbeaten run, and with a strong defensive unit led by Elise Morris '22.5 and Ellie Bavier '22.5, the Panthers appear to have a decent shot at recording back-to-back league wins.

Men's soccer

The Panthers are on course to take the No. 2 seed heading into the playoffs with just one game remaining against Williams (3–1–5). The team had been enjoying a rich vein of form through late September and early October, stringing together six wins in a row, five of which came against NESCAC rivals. However, a recent defeat to a plucky Tufts team (7–2–5) means that the Panthers now sit three points behind Bowdoin at the top of the standings. The Panthers' attack has been spearheaded by winger Jordan Saint-Louis '24, who has netted five times in the league this season. They also boast one of the stingiest defenses in the NESCAC, with goalkeeper Ryan Grady '23.5 posting seven league shutouts and becoming the program's record holder in the category. The team will be hoping their strong defensive acumen can carry them deep into the playoffs, in search of a NESCAC title that has eluded them since 2010.

TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Fanny Lodge '24 plays the ball off to a teammate in a match against Hamilton.

Women's cross country

The women's cross country team is coming off a third place in last year's NESCAC race and 14th at last year's NCAA championships. The Panthers were far off the pace in the recent Connecticut College Invitational, finishing 19th out of 22 teams but notably rested some of their top runners. Assuming Bea Parr '25 and others are at top health at the NESCAC championships, the Panthers could be a force to be reckoned with. The team has looked strong this season with impressive performances from Victoria Fawcett '26, Lucca Franz '26 and the aforementioned Parr, who has two race wins to her name. Ranked 29th in the nation, the Panthers may find it difficult to knock off the defending champions Williams, but they look set to build off their impressive finish last year and solidify their status as one of the top teams in the NESCAC.

Men's cross country

The men's cross country team finished second in last year's NESCAC and 13th at the NCAA championships, and they can expect similar results this year. The Panthers impressed at the recent Connecticut College Invitational, taking third from a field of 23 teams. The team finished comfortably ahead of league rivals, like Colby and Bates, but found themselves a handful of points behind the reigning league champions from Williams. With Alec Gironda '24 and Zander Kessler '22.5 running at top form, the team can safely expect to fend off the majority of their NESCAC competition, but they will need a big team performance to upset a deep Williams team.

Women's golf

The women's golf team finished their season with a third place finish at the New England Intercollegiate Golf Association Championship, finishing just behind league rivals Williams and Amherst, both of whom are in the top 20 in national rankings. Katie Murphy '23 led the Panthers with her fifth place finish while Audrey Tir '25 finished just behind her teammate in seventh. The team finished third in the NESCAC Qualifier, earning them a bid in the NESCAC championship and setting them up well for the spring season, although it will be a difficult challenge to divest Amherst of the NESCAC title.

Men's golf

The men's golf team concluded thThe men's golf team concluded their fall season at the New England Intercollegiate Golf Association Championship, where they placed second out of 23 teams, beating several NESCAC rivals in the process. Sean McGarrity '23 took home the top individual honors to conclude an impressive season, while the ever-reliable Colin McCaigue '24 finished just a few strokes back in sixth. The team is in good shape for the NESCAC championship in the spring, and fans can expect them to make a run at the NESCAC title, which they last won in 2021.

Women's tennis

The Panthers concluded their fall season at the Polar Bear Invitational, going 15–4 in singles play. Sahana Raman '25 and Lulu Wu '26 headlined the day as they both went unbeaten with 3–0 records. The season was highlighted by Charlotte McCann '26's victory in the singles "B" bracket at the Intercollegiate Tennis Association Cup, while Raman and Claudia Miller '25 both posted strong results over the course of the season. The team now turns its attention to the spring season, where they hope to go one better after finishing as runners up last year in the NESCAC.

Men's tennis

The Panthers rounded out their fall season at the Dartmouth Invitational, an event where no team scoring was held. Robby Ward '23.5, Julian Wu '26 and Neel Epstein '25 all ended the season strongly with 3–0 records on the day. Aidan Harris '23.5 and Noah Laber '24, who are both abroad this fall, will bolster the team when they return in the spring. The team is the reigning champion in the NESCAC and were a national semifinalist last year, and despite graduating several key players, they'll be hoping for similar results come spring.